Department of State

TELEGRAM

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ACTION HA-06

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, AR
SUBJECT: MISLEADING REPORTS OF LOCATING "MISSING PERSONS"

REF: BUENOS AIRES 7186

1. THE MISSING PERSONS BUREAU OF THE ARGENTINE FEDERAL POLICE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DIVISION ANNOUNCED ON SEPTEMBER 10, THAT 139 "MISSING PERSONS" HAD BEEN LOCATED IN THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS. (SEE REFTEL.) A CHECK OF THE 139 NAMES LISTED BY THE FEDERAL POLICE AGAINST THE EMBASSY'S FILES OF ABOUT 5,000 DISAPPEARANCE CASES PRODUCED NO MATCHES. WE CONCLUDE THAT THIS LATEST LIST, LIKE THE EARLIER FEDERAL POLICE LISTS OF LOCATED "MISSING PERSONS" OF AUGUST WITH 201 NAMES AND APRIL WITH 232 NAMES, ARE COMPOSED ALMOST ENTIRELY OF NORMAL "MISSING PERSON" CASES - RUNAWAYS, AMNESIA VICTIMS, SHIP JUMPERS, ETC.

2. HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS HERE HAVE CHARACTERIZED THESE FEDERAL POLICE ANNOUNCEMENTS AS PUBLIC RELATIONS EXERCISES TO
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MISLEAD THE ARGENTINE PUBLIC INTO BELIEVING THAT ~~PROGRESS~~ IS

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY [signature] DATE 4/22/82
RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED & RELEASABLE ☒
RELEASE DENIED ☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

BEING MADE IN LOCATING SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF "DISAPPEARED PERSONS". FAMILES OF "DESAPARECIDOS" HAVE REPORTED TO THE EMBASSY THAT EFFORTS TO REGISTER THEIR CASES WITH THE FEDERAL POLICE'S MISSING PERSONS BUREAU HAVE NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL. FEDERAL POLICE OFFICIALS HAVE SENT THE FAMILIES TO REGISTER THEIR CASES TO THE SPECIAL OFFICE RUN BY THE INTERNAL SECURITY DIVISION OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR. THIS OFFICE ANNOUNCED ON JUNE 2 THAT 87 OF THE 2,500 PERSONS LISTED AS DISAPPEARED IN THE MAY HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS LA PRENSA AD HAD BEEN LOCATED. THE PERMANENT ASSEMBLY LATER ANNOUNCED THAT 14 OF THE 87 LOCATED PERSONS WERE STILL DISAPPEARED.

3. EMBASSY COMMENT: THERE APPEARS TO BE THE POSSIBILITY OF CONFUSION IN THE GOA'S PRESENTATION OF INFORMATION REGARDING THE LOCATING OF "MISSING" AND "DISAPPEARED" PERSONS. WHETHER THIS CONFUSION IS INTENDED TO ENHANCE THE ARGENTINE HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD IS NOT CLEAR. HOWEVER, AFTER CHECKING THE NAMES OF THE 672 PERSONS LOCATED BY THE FEDERAL POLICE MISSING PERSONS BUREAU, WE FIND ALMOST NO CORRELATION BETWEEN THOSE PERSONS NAMES AND THE DISAPPEARANCE REPORTS ATTRIBUTED TO GOVERNMENT SECURITY OPERATIONS. INFORMATION REGARDING THIS LATTER CLASS OF CASES APPEARS TO BE CONTROLLED BY THE INTERNAL SECURITY DIVISION, NOT THE FEDERAL POLICE.

4. THE EMBASSY CONTINUES TO LEARN OF REAPPEARANCES OF PERSONS ABDUCTED BY SECURITY FORCES. TO DATE IN 1978, WE HAVE RECEIVED INFORMATION REGARDING 16 REAPPEARANCES. IN A FEW CASES, THE PERSONS WERE HELD INCOMMUNICADO FOR OVER A YEAR BEFORE BEING RELEASED. END COMMENT.
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